

301 The new ornaments had acquired no sentimental value, therefore
321 their price was moderate.

[171] *Omba* shells are to be seen in use from Kipungo southward through Huila, among the Luvando, and among the Vakwanyama of southern Angola. In the places mentioned one may judge the social status of a woman by the number of *omba* shells she wears. A principal wife is usually well supplied with these ornaments.

302 In this southern journey it was noticeable that there was an
171 increasing use of red pigment which is lavishly employed for smearing
[294] every kind of ornament, the body, and the hair. Leather belts and skirts of Vakwanyama women are thickly coated with red pigment which is invariably mixed with grease. The red powder is prepared
[824] by desiccating a red wood called *tukula* by the Vakwanyama, a name which is used through Angola and the southern Congo area.

412 From Kipungo southward through the Vakwanyama country
171 there is a notable absence of decorative wooden hair combs. On the contrary, delicately carved combs are used by both men and women of the Ovimbundu. The Vasele make such combs, but by far the best
[532] examples are made and used by the Vachokue tribe of eastern Angola. Here the decorative design usually includes a well-carved human figure at the top of the comb.

301 Among the Vakwanyama, necklaces of disks made from ostrich
[237] eggshell are worn by the women only. A woman of importance has a dozen loops of such necklaces, each loop being about 125 cm long.
[551] These necklaces are so greatly esteemed that only after much persuasion can a woman be induced to part with a single link. Perhaps, as is the case with *omba* shell, there is more than the intrinsic value to be considered. One point is constantly noticed in considering social status and ornament. All the wives of a wealthy man, especially among the Vakwanyama, are made to advertise their husband's position by the profusion of their ornaments and the quality of their leather skirts and belts.

[321] There is, in addition to the necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, a highly prized necklace made from small perforated disks of shell having a diameter of about a centimeter. The Vakwanyama women smear a necklace of this kind with grease and *tukula* powder; the
[435] value of a necklace 125 cm long is equivalent to that of an ox. In describing these necklaces there is interest in noting that they are traded to the south of Angola from places six hundred miles to the
[439] north; therefore their value is to some extent dependent on rarity and distant origin.

454 Kambungo had
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spent 10,000 escudos, he told me, in buying shells to trade in Kwanyama country and even if this be regarded as an exaggeration such an expedition will cost at least several hundred escudos.

464 I have not so far discussed labour migration and its economic consequences. There are three ways of going out to work: being recruited for 'contract labour', which involves selection by the chief and government headmen who send people to the post whence they are directed to wherever they are required; being recruited by labour-recruiters who visit villages with their lorries; and travelling, usually on foot, to find work. Contract labour is for a year, which may be followed by a fortnight's work at the post to which the *contratados* are returned. The coffee plantations of Amboim and Seles are important centres for voluntary labour from Gumba and neighbouring chiefdoms. Women, and boys from ten years up, go to work there for spells which may be only two months. However, even in Gumba whose people have a reputation for backwardness and for lack of enthusiasm for going away to work, there is nothing at all surprising in meeting men who have learnt a few words of English in Johannesburg.

[592] Of the 36 household heads of Epalanga, 9 were women, and 8 were men who for one reason or another (elders, cripples, the catechist) would not leave the village. Of the other 19, 6 were absent as labourers during some part of my stay, and this figure excludes individuals who were not expected home within a year.

[369] In the cities there are large numbers of permanently or semi-permanently urbanized Ovimbundu, who have largely lost contact with their home villages. Some people who have spent years in the towns may come home—in Epalanga there were at least five women who had visited cities.

Although almost all able-bodied men and many women have lived outside the context of village life as servants to Europeans, as labourers on plantations, and as urban workers, it would be a mistake to think of the rural areas of the Benguela Highland, as being labour reservoirs economically dependent on the towns. It seems that prices of manufactured goods are lower near the railway line and in the cities; hence a man returning from wage labour may buy cloths, a bicycle, a sewing-machine, or a

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gramophone in a town rather than at a trader's near his home village. Most of the money paid for purchases at the stores is money raised by selling crops or livestock. Through labour migration there is, however, some transmission of skills; it is easy to find bricklayers and carpenters of a sort even in Gumba. 435 463

Money, rather than barter, is the principal means of exchange among the villages in the selling of local products, and even of meat from pigs. Payment for labour service, such as assistance in house-building and in bringing in maize, is made in beer, except among Protestants who substitute a meal. There is also a custom by which a household which finds, probably at the end of the dry season, that it has not enough maize will make beer to exchange on a particular day for maize. 437

Ties of kinship and friendship have some economic significance. A kinsman will help with house-building without expecting payment; likewise a man who has a cleared field which he does not want to use may sell it for 200 escudos (£2. 10s.) but would give it free to a kinsman. A man may make a charge for lending his bicycle, though this varies with individuals; he certainly would not do so if it were lent to a friend. Loans between kinsmen should be repaid, and a tailor with a sewing-machine will make the same charges to relatives as to non-kinsmen. 435 602

There are few occasions for groups to work together. The unit of consumption and production is the domestic family. Even here, the husband, each wife, and the adolescents have their own fields, though a man may help his wife. Such other occasions of mutual help, in clearing a field, which may occur between friends or kinsmen, will only bring a few, often only two of them. 476 593

The Ovimbundu I knew were (with exceptions) not avaricious or grasping; thus, beer might be given to people who have not actually worked in house-building parties. It is regarded as a moral duty to pay one's monetary debts as soon as possible. On various occasions I lent money to people who were pressed and I received back all the money lent. Borrowers insisted that borrowings should be written down, and that the paper on which it was written should be given to them when they paid, or destroyed. Making money and being rich are regarded with 152 577 426 000